

The Pelican

For wildlife & people since 1923

Volume 66-Number 9. Newsletter of Halifax River Audubon
September, 2020



Comments & Conservation Notes

A guest editorial for this month's edition from a long time friend of Audubon. Editor.

Volusia Forever and Volusia ECHO

There will be two important local ballot questions on the General Election ballot in November that all Audubon members in Volusia should be aware of and support. Voters will be asked whether to extend Volusia Forever and Volusia ECHO that are both voter approved programs set to expire next year. These award winning programs have protected important wildlife and special areas as well as funded important environmental education centers. Volusia Forever and ECHO have been endorsed by the Audubon Central Florida Regional Conservation Committee and this chapter.

Over the last twenty years, Volusia Forever has permanently protected over 38,000 acres, including much of the Volusia Conservation Corridor, Spruce Creek Preserve, and protection of areas adjacent to rivers, lakes, springs, and preserves. Continuing the program will allow completion of the Conservation Corridor and spring shed protection, and protection of other important natural areas.

Volusia ECHO projects have helped construct museums, cultural and arts facilities, preserved historic sites, and provided opportunities for outdoor recreation throughout the county. Of special importance to Audubon is the construction on environmental learning facilities. Places such as Lyonia Environmental Learning Center, Marine Discovery Center, Marine Science Center, and Stetson's Rinker Environmental Learning Center could not have been built without ECHO funding. Attendance records show that ECHO funded facilities host over 600,000 visitors each year and many more enjoy the 70 miles of trails throughout the county.

The ballot questions will allow for reauthorization of the programs for another 20 years. Since this is a continuation of an existing program, there will be no increase in taxes.

In 1986 Volusia County became the first county in America where voters approved a bond issue to acquire conservation lands. In 2000, Volusia became the first county to adopt twin programs to not only save conservation lands but also develop parks, trails, and other outdoor recreation facilities. These programs have been a tremendous success and have brought national attention and acclaim, but more importantly they protect our quality of life. In each of these earlier campaigns, Audubon members and chapters strongly supported the approval of the programs.

Continued on the following page.

A New Season and a New World

Through the years September has marked the start of the birding season at Halifax River Audubon. The weather moderates, the migrants are heading south, whether passing through or coming in to hang around for the winter. We look forward to the return of human migrants too, our companions on many adventures. We reconnect with everyone and get back into the swing of birding.

Now it is 2020. The year that just keeps on giving, the latest installment featuring a double hurricane event. We have been restricting our movements for 6 months. Now some of us are anxious to get together for some bird watching. We have ventured out individually through the summer. The question, though, is can we find a way to do this as a responsible group?

The HRA Board has considered this over the summer and has instituted new field trip procedures. The usual list of suggested birding gear will now include masks, hand sanitizer and gloves. Sharing spotting scopes and carpooling with anyone other than your "Covid buddies" (people you're already comfortable birding with during the pandemic) is discouraged. Outings will consist of more walking with opportunities to spread out and social distance.

There is a lot of new information on the web site. Please check our policies and the schedule for the Fall by clicking the following links. We are also now on MeetUp for outings and programs. If you sign in on our chapter page, you will automatically receive information about upcoming events.

[Halifax River Audubon on MeetUp](#)

Click the link above to sign up for Meet Up. This application makes scheduling field trips easy for us and you. It also extends our reach into the community as we try to attract new members.

[Field Trips in Challenging Times](#)

Click this link for information on our field trips and the preparations we need you to make in order to join us.

[Halifax River Calendar Of Events](#)

Click this link to see our calendar of events through December. We look forward to your participation with us as we navigate through the uncharted waters of this challenging year.

Joan Tague

Why do we need to extend these programs? First of all we need to acquire additional lands to protect our drinking water supplies as well as protect important water resources like springs, rivers, lakes, and lagoons. But we have also learned during this pandemic that we need more places to safely go outdoors. This includes art museums, cultural facilities, historic preservation, trails, and other outdoor recreation facilities. Taken as a whole, these are the things that make Volusia County special.

For more information on Volusia Forever and Volusia ECHO go to: <https://www.echovolusiaforever.org>

Clay Henderson, President Emeritus

Florida Audubon Society

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Please Help Spread The Word

Here's a link to the [ECHO Volusia Forever](http://www.echovolusiaforever.org) website. On it you'll see an "F" in the upper right hand corner next to the "Donate" button. Clicking on the "F" will take you to their [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/echovolusiaforever) page. Please "share" the site with your Facebook friends. We really appreciate your efforts. Thanks!

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Michael Brothers, our speaker this month, holds an Audubon's Shearwater he's about to release after a period in rehab.

Photo by Melissa Ranley

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A Possible Solution To Bird Deaths At Wind Turbines

From long time member and documentary film maker, George Sibley, comes this story about what sounds like a promising solution to a serious problem. As this article in [Ars Technica](http://www.ars-technica.com) points out these are just the results of one study. Hopefully the results can be repeated at other locations. It would solve a huge problem.

Editor

Zooming Into The Future

Our chapter meetings this year will be held over Zoom for the duration of the COVID 19 emergency. If you're unfamiliar with Zoom it's a computer platform that allows groups of people to interact and both see and hear each other in real time.

In anticipation of that, we are holding a "Town Meeting" on September 9th at 6:00 pm to give you chance to try Zoom. This will be a lively discussion about our Meetings and Field Trips for this year in the current climate. We want to hear your ideas as we present our schedule. The link below will connect you to our calendar and all of the information that you need to get started with Zoom if you have not already tried it. We request that you register for the event either from [MeetUp](https://www.meetup.com/halifaxriveras) or our web site directly to our email address: members@halifaxriveras.org. You can also send any questions that you have to that address in advance of the meeting. For reasons involving security we're asking that you to preregister for the event.

Joan Tague

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Calendar & Events

Monday, September 21st, Member's Meeting- Join us for this first member's meeting held via Zoom. Our speaker, Dr. Michael Brothers. Terns will be the subject for the evening. Anyone who has walked the beaches in Florida is familiar with this group of graceful birds. Michael will give us tips on identification of the gorgeous birds. Again, please be sure to preregister for the meeting so we can send you the link for the meeting via [MeetUp](https://www.meetup.com/halifaxriveras) or our email address: members@halifaxriveras.org

Field Trips

Friday, September 18th, Dunlawton Bridge- Join David Hartgrove at 4:00 pm at the bridge. No lunch for this one as we walk the area looking for migrant and resident shorebirds and others. A Common Eider was reported here recently. Maybe the bird will still be here when we are. Questions, Call David at 386-235-1249.

Saturday, September 26th, Merritt Island and Biolab Road- Join David Hartgrove for this trip to a great birding destination. We'll meet at 7:30 am at Target in Port Orange, on Dunlawton just east of I-95 behind Panera. Carpooling will be limited to those you feel comfortable with and we'll have our radios to maintain communication. Bring lunch. We'll be finished by 3:00 pm. Questions, Call David at 386-235-1249.

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Here's a link to a story Ray Scory sent for the Pelican

A Man, A Dog and a Hummingbird

Here's a [link](#) to a story from Southern California. The bird is a female Allen's Hummingbird. Enjoy!

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From The Quotable Birder

"He was like a cock who thought the sun had risen to hear him crow."

George Eliot, Adam Bede

² George Eliot was the pen name of Mary Ann Evers. Adam Bede was her first published novel in 1859.

Birding 101 for Fall 2020

The annual "Bird Class for Beginners" was a rousing success last year. We actually had to turn people away. With that kind of response to the program, we have devised a way to offer the class this year. The lectures will be over Zoom. There will be 3 lecture sessions scheduled 3 weeks apart. A complimentary Field Experience will be offered in the week following each class. If we have a large class, we will divide the class between 2 or more trips to provide individual instruction and social distancing. You can make your reservation and pay directly from the web site. The information brochure with the date and details and mail in form are available now on the website.

Here's the link to the [Birding 101](#) webpage. This year the flow of the lectures will be "organic" in nature. Each session will focus on the birds that we would expect to see on our field trips. For instance, we will study warblers, blackbirds and more in the October session. Raptors and more are covered in November. In December we will look towards lakes, marshes and the ocean the study the birds that live on or near the water. During each of these sessions we will introduce the tools and skills that you will learn while exploring the diverse habitats of Central Florida.

Who should attend this class? Beginners, naturally but those that wish to brush up on their skills have enjoyed this class. Another demographic would include birders that are new to Central Florida. Birding is always a matter of perspective and the point of view in our neck of the woods could be quite different from what you re used to.

Snowbirder? Sign up for the lectures and we will have "make-up" and continuing sessions for folks that want to have birding sessions that are paced to reinforce the basics you will learn in class. We will work with our wintering friends to accommodate their schedules as they "migrate" south.

Questions? Please address them to Joan Tague at members@halifaxriveras.org.

Joan Tague

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Here's a Bird We'll Be Looking For When We Go To MINWR

On September 26th we'll be taking a field trip to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge along Biolab Road. The reason we're going to this place in late September is that it's a great spot for migrating shorebirds, like this Purple Sandpiper.



Purple Sandpiper, *Photo by Chuck Tague*

Here's a report from Bob Lane. He and his wife, Denise, winter here in Pinellas County from their home in Ohio.

Strange Goings On in Ohio

Florida birders, the unthinkable has happened, a state record juvenile Brown Booby is in Northeast Ohio. First seen by three birders late Tuesday night, August 25th, at Nimisila Reservoir Metro Park, in Summit County. The location is a popular destination this time of year to watch thousands of staging Purple Martins coming into roost just after sunset. Thus, this was probably the arrival date of the celebrity visitor, otherwise, it would have been detected earlier. Why or how it got here, who knows! Being in Florida six months of the year, as some of you know, my wife Denise and I have followed the comings and goings of The Pinellas County Brown Boobies for the past four years. Those birds roosted on towers that once held power lines and now both the lines and the towers have been removed.

Yesterday morning, Wednesday, just after daybreak, apparent karma was on my side. With about thirty-two other birders present, I was the one to relocate the booby on a dead snag along the shoreline. It must have been meant to be! Thirty miles from our Ohio home, I became the fourth birder to see it. Shortly after, the word got out. The floodgate of birders and photographers was constant the rest of the day up until dark. The Brown Booby adds to the Florida connection of Ohio state record birds recorded in recent years. Last year, about this same time in August 2019, we had a Limpkin, possibly two. A remarkable Gray Kingbird was here in October 2018. Presently, just to the north on the south shore of Lake Erie, is an adult Brown Pelican. Some of the other recent notables are Roseate Spoonbill, Sooty Tern, and Reddish Egret. Times are a changing. Anything can show up! And by the way, the cooperative Brown Booby is reportedly still present this morning, Thursday, in the same dead snag tree.

Bob Lane



Juvenile Brown Booby photographed in Northeast Ohio

Photo by Bob Lane

Backyard Birding

"When my husband and I moved into our current home in the summer of 2017 we were not avid birders. Some time after that we realized our neighborhood was home to a flock of White-winged Doves, a new species for both of us. We started counting them when they visited our yard and made a house checklist on eBird. After that we started spending more and more of our free time birding. In 2018 we had a total of 61 species on the house checklist. In 2019 that count rose to 92, with some extra special sightings including a Purple Finch, 16 species of warblers, and a Summer Tanager that overwintered with us. 2019 also marked the year we started to make our little yard a little more wildlife friendly. We planted coral honeysuckle and firebush around the yard as natural hummingbird feeders. We built a brush pile for cover that was quickly occupied by a family of Carolina Wrens, and added a DIY water feature that all the birds use regularly. Just this month (March 2020) we've seen 60 species in (and flying over) the yard. I'm working from home as much as possible, and with that comes more time in the morning and afternoon to sit out in the yard with binoculars and birdwatch. House bird #103 was a Louisiana Waterthrush that I spotted walking through the backyard while I was answering emails (the home office has a great view of our feeders)."

Kelly O'Connor



White-winged Doves on her feeder. Photo by Kelly O'Connor

Have a backyard birding story you'd like to share? Email us at wildlifeviewing@myfwc.com for a chance to be featured in Kite Tales!

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Audubon Adventures

[Audubon Adventures](#), is a wonderful program that helps engage kids in the natural world around them. Ranked as one of the most popular environmental education curricula in the country, our chapter has been donating to provide this valuable program to Volusia County school kids since its inception. Donations from members fund this program. 45.00 dollars will cover the cost for one classroom. Any amount will be greatly appreciated. Send your donation to Halifax River Audubon, P.O. Box 166, Daytona Beach FL 32115-0166. Please specify on your check that your donation is for Audubon Adventures. And thank you!

Welcome to Our New and Returning Members

We extend a warm welcome to our new and renewing members: William Batchelor, Judith Becker, Nancy Brown, Donna Burley, Walter Bushika, Renate Calero, Larry Carrico, Janet Clark, Susan Countryman, Mary Jane Dill, Joan Ellis, Willie Fields, Richard Goldstein, Jane Hecker, Shirley Horn, Delores Jackson, Carl Krueger, Richard Litkenhaus, Richard Moore, Christopher Ringue II, Phillip Waldstein, Donna Weber, Ken & Margo Wenzel. We hope to see you on a field trip or in one of our upcoming Zoom meetings.

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A Special Thank You

We extend a special note of thanks to David Groh for the generous donation made in his mother's honor. Virginia Groh was a long time member who passed away recently and David made the donation in her memory. Thank You!

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THE PELICAN

is published monthly by Halifax River Audubon, a chapter of the National Audubon Society and a member of Audubon Florida serving eastern Volusia County.

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Meets monthly September through May

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We wish to thank our sponsors, whose contributions play a vital part of allowing us to continue our work: Florida Power & Light, Colonial Colony and the Spruce Creek Garden and Nature Club.